

Minnesota State Department of Public Safety



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State Fire Marshal Division

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HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL PRODUCTS PLACARDS-LABELING

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

This fire safety information sheet is intended to assist AHJ's with the requirements for labeling hazardous materials under the various regulations of DOT, OSHA and MSFC. Any reference to the fire code is based upon the 2007 Minnesota State Fire Code (MSFC).

There is some confusion on what is required for labeling products since the HazCom 2012 and Globally Harmonized System (GHS) were introduced. The goal of this document is to make these regulations clearer. Each of these three hazard identification systems (DOT, NFPA 704 and GHS) are for use in a specific transport, storage, handling or information purpose. Each hazard identification system must be used as specified in the applicable code or standard. One hazard identification system does not supersede the other and they are not interchangeable.

More information is available from the State Fire Marshal Division at (651) 201-7200. E-mail questions to firecode@state.mn.us or check out our web page at www.fire.state.mn.us for the latest information on fire in Minnesota.

SECTION 2 – DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT) PLACARDS

2.1 Placards

Train rail cars and highway trucks are required to be placarded per Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Placards must be placed on the vehicle so they are visible from both sides and both ends.

2.1 ID Numbers

Many chemicals have four digit identification numbers which are displayed on the placard along with the threat the material poses. The four-digit UN/NA numbers are listed in an Emergency Response Guidebook published by the Department of Transportation.

2.3 Purpose of Placards

The Placard number and the Emergency Response Guidebook gives emergency response personnel the information they need to respond to incidents on the road or railway appropriately.

SECTION 3 – MINNESOTA STATE FIRE CODE SIGNS

3.1 Signs

Unless otherwise exempted by the fire code official, visible hazard identification signs as specified in NFPA 704 for the specific material contained shall be placed on stationary containers and above-ground tanks and at entrances to locations where hazardous materials are stored, dispensed, used or handled in quantities requiring a permit and at specific entrances and locations designated by the fire code official.

3.2 NFPA 704

Signs shall be in locations approved by the authority having jurisdiction and as a minimum shall be posted at the following locations:

- (1) Two exterior walls or enclosures containing a means of access to a building or facility,
- (2) Each access to a room or area, or
- (3) Each principal means of access to an exterior storage area.

SECTION 4 – OSHA / HAZCOM 2012 PRODUCT LABELING

4.1 Requirements

Chemical manufacturers or importers are required to classify the hazards of chemicals which they produce or import, and all employers to provide information to their employees about the hazardous chemicals to which they are exposed, by means of a hazard communication program, labels and other forms of warning, safety data sheets, and information and training. In addition, this section requires distributors to transmit the required information to employers.

4.2 Label Requirements

Requirements for labeling of hazardous chemicals by the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) can be found at the OSHA.gov website and search for HazCom. This is a link to the label requirements; [HazCom Label Requirements](#).

4.3 Safety Data Sheets

Safety Data Sheets (SDS), formerly Material Safety Data Sheets, shall meet the requirements established by the HCS. This requires new SDS's to be in a uniform format, and include section numbers, the headings, and associated information under the heading.

4.4 MSFC

Section 2703.5.1 requires individual containers, cartons or packages to be conspicuously marked or labeled in an approved manner. The approved manner shall be the requirements established by OSHA and HCS.

SECTION 5 – SIGNIFICANT DATES

Employers shall train employees on the new labeling and SDS requirements by December 1, 2013. Chemical manufacturers, importers, distributors and employers shall be in compliance by June 1, 2015. All new hazardous chemicals shall be labeled per the new requirements by June 1, 2015.

SECTION 6 – SUMMARY

DOT placards provide information to emergency personnel on the contents of vehicles, rail cars and other containers transporting hazardous chemicals. NFPA 704 signs provide information to emergency personnel on health, flammability, instability, and special hazards contained inside a room or container. HCS requirements provide information for employees on products containing hazardous chemicals.